

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SANA 01489 190514Z
ACTION NEA-07

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R 181300Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY SANA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1000
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T SANA 1489

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2 IMPDET
TAGS: PINR, PINS, PINT
SUBJECT: YEMENI FOREIGN MINISTER'S REQUEST FOR INFORMATION RE YEMENI
AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON

1. DURING APRIL 17 DISCUSSION OF THE RECENT AL-HAJRI ASSASSINATION
(SEE SEPTTEL) FOREIGN MINISTER ABDALLAH AL-ASNAJ STATED THAT GIVEN
YEMEN'S WEAK AND OFTEN UNRELIABLE INTELLIGENCE APPARATUS, THERE
ARE MANY STORIES NOW CIRCULATING IN SANA ABOUT THE ALLEGED ROLE
OF VARIOUS INDIVIDUALS IN THAT ASSASSINATION. AL-ASNAJ SAID THAT

ONE PROBLEM IS THAT SOME PEOPLE ARE APPARENTLY USING THIS EVENT AS
AN EXCUSE TO EVEN OLD PERSONAL SCORES. AL-ASNAJ CONTINUED
THAT IN THIS CONTEXT A REPORT HAS COME TO HIS ATTENTION
ALLEGING THAT YEMENI AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, YAHYA
AL-MUTAWAKKIL, WAS IN LONDON ON A SECRET VISIT SEVERAL
DAYS BEFORE THE AL-HAJRI ASSASSINATION. AL-ASNAJ HASTENED
TO ADD HE DID NOT BELIEVE THE REPORT BUT THAT AL-MUTAWAKKIL
IS KNOWN TO HAVE CONNECTIONS WITH MUHSIN AL-AYNI AND THAT
THIS REPORT UNLESS OTHERWISE DISPROVEN, WOULD ONLY FURTHER
CONVINCE PRESIDENT AL-AHMADI OF POSSIBLE AL-MUTAWAKKIL
INVOLVEMENT NOT ONLY IN THE AL-HAJRI ASSASSINATION BUT IN
WHAT IS NOW BELIEVED TO BE A MAJOR ANTI-REGIME PLOT

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INVOLVING MUHSIN AL-AYNI AND THE ABU LUHUM CLAN WITH
IRAQI AND LIBYAN SUPPORT.

2. AL-ASNAJ ASKED IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE ON A STRICTLY
CONFIDENTIAL BASIS TO ASCERTAIN THE ACTUAL WHEREABOUTS OF
THE AMBASSADOR FOR THE TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE ASSASSINATION
OF AL-HAJRI ON APRIL 10. HE STRESSED THAT IT IS ABSOLUTELY

IMPERATIVE THAT NO ONE IN THE EMBASSY HAVE ANY IDEA OF THIS INQUIRY. AL-ASNAJ CONCLUDED BY OBSERVING THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO SCOTCH THIS REPORT EARLY AND HE HOPED THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WOULD BE COOPERATIVE IN PROVIDING THE INFORMATION.

3. COMMENT: I REALIZE THIS IS AN UNUSUAL REQUEST TO MAKE OF THE DEPARTMENT. IN VIEW OF THE TROBLED INTERNAL SITUATION HERE, HOWEVER, AS WELL AS THE PENCHANT FOR YEMENIS TO TELL STORIES ON ONE ANOTHER FOR PERSONAL BENEFIT IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF WE COULD SUPPLY THE INFORMATION WHICH AL-ASNAJ HAS REQUESTED BY ASKING THE INS ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS IF AL-MUTAWAKKIL WAS OUT OF THE COUNTRY DURING THIS TIME AND, IF SO, WAS HE IN LONDON.

4. FOR LONDON: IS IT POSSIBLE TO ASK OUR BRITISH FRIENDS IF AL-MUTAWAKKIL WAS IN LONDON DURING THIS TIME?
SCOTES

SECRET

NNN

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